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## SERVICE

# NEWS

ISSUED FOR THE STAFF OF THE SOIL CONSERVATION  
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March 26, 1941

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It's efficiency rating season in the SCS.

Any day now, your supervisor may complain of dancing plus and minus signs before his eyes or begin to mutter adjectives to himself in an incoherent undertone. Don't worry--it's just the rating fever back again. Supervisors get it every year about this time.

Your correspondent went to the Personnel people the other day for some information about this perennial personal score-card keeping. Here's what they had to say

The most frequent criticism of the "service rating" system seems to be that the rating depends upon a supervisor's own personal evaluation of vague and general characteristics. To different rating officers "thoroughness" may have quite different meanings; so may "judgment" or "initiative", and so on. Supervisors, moreover, may have different standards, so that "good" means to one what "excellent" means to another. Furthermore, since all professional employees, as well as clerical personnel in grades one to eleven, are rated on the same elements, there is a tendency to grade them all by the same

standard, regardless of grade, job description, or type of work.

In order to make the present system work satisfactorily, therefore, it is necessary for all rating officers to follow substantially the same standards as a basis for their ratings. The efficiency rating manual has been prepared in an effort to achieve this sort of agreement, and should be studied carefully by every supervisor, whether he has one or fifty-one employees to rate.

Some "don'ts" for supervisors are

1. Don't allow the rating to be influenced by purely personal considerations. Of course no one will admit to being influenced in this way, but personal likes and dislikes too often creep into efficiency ratings.
2. Don't allow the performance of the employee in recent weeks or in one or two instances to determine his rating. The rating is supposed to be based on "long-run" performance over the entire rating period.
3. Don't allow one or two specific weaknesses or strong points to influence the rating unduly.
4. Avoid over-rating. Exceptional employees should be given full recognition in their efficiency rating, of course, but there seems to be a general tendency to rate too high. This probably is due to the supervisor's failure to judge the performance of his own employees in relation

(Continued on page 3)



## NEW PROJECT PLANNING PROCEDURE HAS TRYOUT

"New project planning procedure, designed to improve and speed up the development of district activities is now being tried at a number of work areas throughout the country," says Dr. Austin L. Patrick, Assistant Chief in Charge of Surveys and Project Plans. The new procedure coordinates very closely the work of the three divisions of Project Plans, Physical Surveys, and Economic Surveys; as a result it is believed that district supervisors will be able to put into operation, in less time and with greater assurances of success, work plans which will include conservation practices that are most suitable to their particular district.

In operation, the procedure involves the same approach to farm problems which was employed in the Elbert County, Colorado, study. In fact, the Elbert County survey, which was reported in the January 11 issue of *SERVICE NEWS*, was undertaken as the initial step in the development of the systematic project planning process.

As set up, the project planning procedure stresses the uses of simple methods to group farms that have the same physical characteristics and the same economic problems. Sample farms in each of these groups are given a careful physical and economic check-up to picture the conservation program suitable for the farms in the group. In this way district supervisors learn what groups of farms present the most serious problems of conservation, what these problems are, where they are, and hence, where action ought to start first and what things most need to be done. They are thus able to build programs and work plans that lead directly into effective action.

The chiefs of the Economic Surveys, Physical Surveys, and Project Plans divisions have been working together for months on the new project planning procedure.

Recently the chiefs of these divisions, C. F. Clayton, E. A. Norton, and R. H. Davis, visited regions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 to discuss details of the procedure with regional conservators and members of their staffs engaged in the project planning aspects of the Service's work. The procedure was favorably received in all regions visited, and steps are being taken to try it out in one or more work areas in each region. In other regions which the chiefs did not visit, work along these project planning lines has already been initiated, or advice has been received that such work will be initiated in the near future.

Districts or work areas in which the new procedure is now being applied, include:

Region I: Kent County (Maryland) Soil Conservation District; Schuyler County (New York) Soil Conservation District.

Region II: Upper Ocmulgee Soil Conservation District, Georgia.

Region III: (Planning work under the new procedure to be undertaken about May 1.)

Region IV: Bosque-Somervell (Texas) Soil Conservation District; McCurtain County (Oklahoma) District and Land Utilization Project.

Region V: Jo Daviess County (Illinois) Soil Conservation District; Lucas County (Iowa) Soil Conservation District; Barton County (Missouri) Land Utilization Project Proposal; Montgomery County (Iowa) Soil Conservation District; Pike County (Illinois) Land Utilization Project Proposal.

Region VI: Agate (Colorado) Soil Erosion District (Elbert County); Horse & Rush Creeks (Colorado) Soil Erosion District (Elbert County); Cheyenne (Colorado) Soil Erosion District (Cheyenne County),  
(Continued on page 3)

## BRIEFS FROM SCS CAMPS

The Bunkersville, Nev., CCC camp offers a good use for junk. Furnished by the farmers cooperating with the camp program, the junk is used in building revetments to keep the valley farms from being washed into the muddy Virgin River.

The Kaufman, Texas, Chamber of Commerce is so proud of its CCC camp (SCS-34) that the secretary has invited the Duke of Windsor to pay it a visit, if and when the former king makes his projected study of governmental institutions in this country. The Duke has expressed special interest in the work of the CCC camps.

By traveling 614,000 miles over a period of six years without an accident to the camp's automotive equipment, the Columbus, Nebr., camp (SCS-18) believes it has established a safety record for the rest of the CCC to shoot at.

## WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT (Continued from page 1)

to the performance of similar employees in other offices. That doesn't mean that employees should be rated by a "curve", but merely that each rating officer should look above and beyond his own immediate office before deciding how high his employees should rate in comparison with other employees of the same kind. Extremes of ability are pretty rare.

5. Don't confuse seniority with performance. A new employee may be just as capable, dependable, and otherwise valuable as an old one..

6. Don't fail to give proper weight to differences in grade and type of work. This is a frequent cause of improper rating. In the next issue of the NEWS we'll tell you about John Doe, a capable and conscientious rating officer, who fell into an easy error of this kind.

## GLICK AND GASTON TALK AT DISTRICTS MEETINGS

Philip M. Glick, Chief of the Land Policy Division in the Solicitor's Office, and T. L. Gaston, Acting in Charge of Co-operative Relations and Information, left March 17 to attend a series of meetings in Regions 6, 9, and 10. They will discuss the soil conservation districts program, its philosophy and objectives at meetings open to members of district governing bodies, extension workers, state soil conservation committees, county agents, farmers, field representatives of other Departmental and State agencies, as well as SCS representatives.

Meetings have been scheduled for Manhattan, Kans., March 19; Amarillo, Texas, Mar. 21; Los Angeles, Cal., Mar. 25; Berkeley, Cal., Mar. 26; Reno, Nev., Mar. 27; Portland, Ore., Mar. 31; Spokane, Wash., April 2; Boise, Idaho, April 4.

## NEW PLANNING PROCEDURE (Continued from page 2)

Region VII: Cedar River Soil Conservation District (Nebraska) (Wheeler and Greeley Counties).

Region VIII: Fence Lake Area (New Mexico) (Grant County); Elephant Butte Irrigation District (New Mexico) (Socorro County); Special Grazing District No. 7 (New Mexico) (Bernalillo County).

Region IX: Latah County (Idaho) Soil Conservation District; Portneuf (Idaho) Soil Conservation District (Bannock County); Montesano (Washington) Soil Conservation District (Grays Harbor County).

Region X: Central Eldorado (California) Soil Conservation District (Eldorado County); Colusa County (California) Soil Conservation District; San Mateo (California) Soil Conservation District (San Mateo County).



## LET'S GET ACQUAINTED WITH OUR NEW DISTRICTS

According to latest figures available, 460 soil conservation districts, covering approximately 282,330,915 acres, have been established in the 39 States which have enacted a soil conservation districts law. The USDA has entered into memoranda of understanding with 346 districts, covering approximately 208,446,165 acres. In addition, 94 W.P.A. Soil Conservation Projects sponsored by 79 soil conservation districts have received Presidential authorization.

The districts formed within the past month are: Squaw Creek, Idaho, 300,000 acres; Jo Daviess County, Ill., 153,835 acres; Daviess County, Ind., 211,000 acres; Union County, Ky., 200,000 acres; McCracken County, Ky., 60,000 acres; Garrard County, Ky., 129,000 acres; Grand Fork, N. D., 552,960 acres; Nelson County, N.D., 645,120 acres; Dallam, Tex., 980,480 acres; Deaf Smith, Tex., 991,360 acres; Oldham, Tex., 987,520 acres; Hansford, Tex., 564,480 acres; Hartley, Tex., 964,480 acres; Moore, Tex., 589,440 acres; Ochiltree, Tex., 570,240 acres; Lipscomb, Tex., 572,160 acres; and South Emery, Utah, 1,789,000 acres. The eight new districts in Texas are designated as wind erosion districts.

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The Berkeley regional office is employing 12 auxiliary workers from the National Youth Administration, in various clerical and professional capacities with very satisfactory results. The NYA workers are assigned to jobs along the lines of their vocational or professional training. One worker, a University of California graduate who holds a secondary teacher's credential, is assisting in educational relations work. Another helper, who had previous experience in photography, is helping in the visual education section. Each of the young people may work sixty hours a month for a period of nine months.

## ARIZONA AND MAINE HAVE ENACTED DISTRICT LAWS

Arizona and Maine have enacted soil conservation districts laws and thereby have become the fortieth and forty-first States, respectively, to provide the farmers with enabling legislation to combat soil erosion. The governor of Arizona signed the districts bill for that State last week, while the Maine governor affixed his signature to his State bill on March 25. The Maine House of Representatives had given the bill a unanimous vote.

Districts bills are now pending in five other State legislatures--Connecticut, Delaware, Missouri, New Hampshire, and Ohio--and are awaiting action of those governing bodies.

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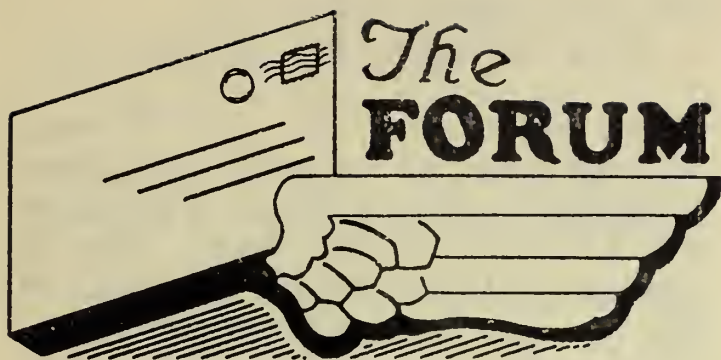
Several amendments to the Indiana soil conservation district law were adopted by the state legislature at its recent session. The changes had to do with the margin of majority required to approve creation of a district and to enact land use ordinances, assessment of costs for work performed by the district under a conservation ordinance, and an extension of the time lapse required before a new petition can be submitted for a district that has once been voted down.

As originally introduced, the bill amending the State act would have forestalled the organization of new districts and additions to existing districts in the State. Amendments to the original bill, however, prevented its having this effect.

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Fourteen students of conservation and their teacher from the George School, Pa., called on Dr. Bennett and were entertained by the Chief with an illustrated lecture on soil erosion and the work of the SCS. The conservation students were a part of the Quaker school's senior class which had come to Washington on a sight-seeing and educational trip.





EDITOR, SERVICE NEWS: In connection with your Forum discussion of "Land Utilization" as a name for the program under Title III, I wish to offer some suggestions. I agree that the present term means little or nothing to those interested in description. Since your critics have offered nothing constructive, I might suggest that you change the name to "Conservation Planning and Adjustment." The term conservation ties the program up with the general theme of the Service. Planning is always necessary for the proper functioning of any program, particularly when acquisition and adjustments of both human and physical resources are involved. Adjustments will cover all adjustments, physical, economic, and social, that may be involved in the promotion of "sound and stable agricultural communities" under the Title III program. Furthermore, the phrase, while slightly longer, is not clumsy; but is descriptive.

Incidentally, your resume of the objections to the present title included a reference to the aim of the program as being to provide "the maximum opportunity for the maximum number of families....." Rather, you might have said maximum opportunity for an optimum number of families. Undoubtedly, you have drawn the idea from the definition of conservation that Dr. Van Hise popularized some years ago, in which he made the error of stating the ideal of conservation as being the "greatest good for the greatest number and that for the longest period of time." In my humble opinion, we are not interested in the maximum number, but the greatest good for an optimum number of people. Hence, we limit population by immigration laws

and birth-control, in order to achieve a higher standard of living and less pressure on land resources.

W. E. C.

EDITOR, SERVICE NEWS: Whose "neck is out"? Maybe it's mine. If so, let the axe fall. But I'll tell the world, someone will be disappointed for they will not get blood, if that's what they are looking for--'cause I don't think there is anything in it. Am I referring to the "neck" or to the knot above it, or to the expression that seems to be so prevalent among Service employees? You guess.

Anyway, it strikes me that somethin' is being overworked. I hope it's not my "neck"; no one has ever charged it was the "knot" above referred to. I think it is the expression one constantly hears, "I'm not going to stick my neck out", from various members of the Service. Just wonder if this is a "bogy", and someone is just seeing things, or is it really true that someone is really sitting in some remote corner away back in Washington, or maybe nearer to us out here in the Field, waiting to trip the "infernal machine" that will sever the cephalic organ from the less precious portion of our body. A gruesome thought, indeed.

Personally, I feel it is but an "alarming apparition" seen only by those suffering from an inferiority complex, or somethin'. But, maybe I'm wrong. Just like to know. Maybe I'll find out. But, if I do and bad comes to worst, it will be too late to do me any good. Will someone tell me?

I don't believe in hobgoblins, tho', and have always thrilled at the exclamation of one of Shakespeare's characters (or was it?) who soliloquized thus: "Cowards die many times before their death, but the valiant never taste of death but once."

(Continued on page 7)



## SCS LOANS RAIN GAGES TO WEATHER BUREAU

About 100 recording rain gages and a similar number of non-recording gages have been released by Region 5 on an indefinite loan agreement to the newly organized hydrologic offices of the U. S. Weather Bureau at Iowa City, Iowa, and Kansas City, Missouri. These offices have already re-established most of the gages at strategic locations in the recent expansion of the hydrologic network in the upper Mississippi and Missouri River watersheds. Prior to this release, the gages were located in concentrated groups within the boundaries of 19 SCS demonstration projects. Under the new program, ordinarily only one recorder is retained in each project area.

Final details of the expansion of the network were worked out cooperatively between the SCS Flood Survey Section and the Weather Bureau. The Weather Bureau has secured the services of local cooperative observers, has issued instructions to the observers, and has reestablished the gages through their field representatives. Since the transfer, all records are routed directly from the observers to the respective Weather Bureau hydrologic offices, thereby relieving the SCS project personnel of maintenance and servicing operations.

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The South Muskegon Soil Conservation District in Michigan, with the assistance of the county agent, has helped 46 different political subdivisions in the district to secure 103 different parcels of land from the State Land Board during 1940. This land, totaling some 5000 acres, is submarginal and is being planted to trees by school children and the people of the district as rapidly as time and funds permit. Last year, 1,100 school children and their parents took part in 33 community and school "planting bees", at which 146 thousand trees were planted. This type of work will be continued until the entire 5,000 acres are in community forests.

## 78 CCC CAMPS COMPLETE YEAR WITHOUT ACCIDENT

Seventy-eight of the 391 CCC camps directed by the SCS completed 1940 without a single lost-time accident, a survey by the SCS safety council reveals. Camps at Stockton, Illinois; Hebron, Nebraska; and Mt. Pleasant, Utah, stretched their perfect records to three successive years.

Sixteen more camps, which completed two successive accident-free years, are located at Sligo, Pennsylvania; Beverly, West Virginia; Gordonsville, Virginia; Forest City, North Carolina; Eutaw, Alabama; Fresno, Ohio; Beulah, Colorado; Jacksonville, Arkansas; Berryville, Arkansas; Rush Springs, Oklahoma; Belle Plaine, Iowa; Monticello, Iowa; Mexico, Missouri; Platte City, Missouri; Platteville, Wisconsin; and Moscow, Idaho.

Fifty-nine other camps established one-year records.

All will receive Safety Certificates in recognition of their achievements in the interest of safety.

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## FIELD MEMORANDA

Issued March 6 - 17

904-H Replacement for Employees Furloughed for Military Training and Service. (Statement of policy in recommending personnel actions subject to return of employees from military training and service.)

805-D Delegation of Broader Authority to Chiefs, Regional Service Operations Division. (Delegation of additional authority re procurement of photographic supplies.)

990 Execution of Certificates in Connection with the Acquisition of Title III Lands. (Authorization to execute Forms SCS 458 and 459.)



## MORE SCS MEN REPORT FOR MILITARY TRAINING

Here is the latest report of SCS personnel recently granted military furloughs:

Washington: Andrew F. Scherer, National Guard; James I. Waters, St. Sgt. AC-RAR.

Region I: Joseph G. Toth, Private National Guard; Gilmore L. Oesterling, 1st Lt. Engr-Res; Lewis R. Good, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Robert M. Moyer.

Region II: Bedford H. Forrest, Capt. Inf-Res; Jack R. Hutcheson, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Oscar D. Price, Capt. Inf-Res; William G. Yarborough, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; James E. Griffith, Selective Service; Douglass E. Post, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Rellie W. Adams, 1st Lt. CAV-RES; George Richard Carter, 1st Lt. Engr-Res; Charles C. Griffin; Emory R. Minnich, 1st Lt. CA-RES; Alexander H. Veazey, Major Inf-Res; Horace F. Butler; Robert E. Hereford, 1st Lt. Eng-Res; Lawrence Alfred Martin, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; William W. Moschler; Thomas W. Neely, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; William W. Stevens, Capt. CW-RES.

Region III: Eugene A. Blackford, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Chester Levi Gray; Dalson H. Esry, 1st Lt. CA-RES; Chester D. Brewer, 1st Lt. Engr-Res; Robert S. Thomas.

Region IV: James E. Boothe, 1st Lt. CAV-RES; Johnnie A. Flowers; Wesley E. Jacoby; Robert E. Lewis, 1st Lt. Engr-Res; Jesse H. Beene, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Fred Gremmel, 1st Lt. CAV-RES; Frederick F. Hollier, Jr.; Lillard G. Wilmeth; Jack D. Paul, 2nd Lt. Inf-Res; Tom C. Morris, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; John F. Ryan, Selective Service; Brad Scott, National Guard; John Sentell, 2nd Lt. Inf-Res; John W. Tompkins, 2nd Lt. CA-RES; Raymond B. Burdick, 1st Lt. Inf-Res.

Region V: Loren A. Gwin, National Guard; Harold R. Sandelius, National Guard;

Floyd A. Skow, 1st Lt. Engr-Res; Grant R. Jones, 1st Lt. Sn-Res; Gerson J. Harris, 1st Lt. CAV-RES; Clarence M. Olson.

Region VI: Gordon A. Douglas; Manford R. Murphy, 2nd Lt. FA-RES; Harold R. New, 1st Lt. CA-RES; Robert S. Park, 2nd Lt. FA-RES; Wallace L. Webb; Wynn A. Collier.

Region VII: John W. Brownrigg, National Guard; Everett L. Gilland, National Guard; John W. Sponsler, National Guard; George H. Decker, National Guard; Lowell A. Yost, Capt. Engr-Res; Warren W. Dutton, National Guard; George C. Sims, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Dale E. Harper, 1st Lt. CAV-RES.

Region VIII: Thomas C. Burrell, National Guard; Wayne W. Morris, Capt. Inf-Res; Spelman Downer, 1st Lt. CAV-RES; Harry J. Koepp; John D. Rigg; Otto A. Sonntag, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Omar H. Heins, 2nd Lt. Inf-Res; John E. Stephenson, 1st Lt. FA-RES; Gerald Hansen, 1st Lt. CA-RES.

Region IX: None.

Region X: Morris Dreizen.

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## THE FORUM

(Continued from page 5)

No, I'm not afraid, but I do sometimes get nervous. Not because I'm afraid, but 'cause--well, just 'cause I hate to feel that someone is waiting to cut my head off, while I am workin' so hard trying to do something for my country. If there is a "Fifth Columnist" among us, let's get 'im. Then I'll stop being nervous. If it is a mere will-'o-the-wisp, I'll stop being nervous--'cause I don't believe in "bogies", anyway, as I said. If someone could do somethin' to settle my nerves, I sure could make a better hand--and that would be somethin'.

H.F.

"Soil Saving Shows Results" by N. E. Winters, Principal Soil Conservationist at Honolulu, January *Hawaii Farm and Home*.

"Ground-Water Supplies in the Mid-Continent Area" by L. L. Harrold, Hydraulic Engineer of Washington Hydrologic Division, February *Civil Engineering*.

"An Inventory of the Soil. Fergus (Montana) Areas Get Soil Conservation Service Aid" by T. C. Anderson, Region 7 Senior Soil Conservationist, January *Montana Farmer*.

"Fluctuating Forage Production" by J. L. Lantow, Chief, Regional Range Conservation Division, and E. L. Flory, Range Examiner, both of Region 8, in March *The Cattleman*.

A page spread of pictures featuring work of 38 SCS drainage camps appears in the March 1 issue of *Happy Days*.

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Mabel Bennett, who wields an editorial pencil in the Publications Unit, has asked that we issue a plea to all SCS writers who are preparing manuscripts for Departmental publication to become well acquainted with--and follow--rules for writing as set forth in the new mimeographed booklet issued by the Division of Information entitled "Style of Manuscripts to be Published in the Departmental Series."

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J. A. Gibbs, regional forester for the Ohio Valley, presented a paper, "Some Results of Woods Improvement," before the Michigan Academy of Science, March 14.

K. Lehotsky of the Grand Rapids, Michigan, area staff discussed the subject, "Sand Dune Fixation in Michigan," at the same meeting. Born and educated in Central Europe, Mr. Lehotsky has studied dune fixation extensively; has worked in European countries and South America.

The following publications are now available upon request:

"Intensive Projects Under the Cooperative Farm Forestry Act," Leaflet No. 208.

"Methods of Distinguishing Between the Shipmast and Common Forms of Black Locust on Long Island, N. Y." by Henry Hopp, Technical Bulletin 742.

"Guarding a Heritage", SCS pamphlet for distribution in connection with the SCS movie "A Heritage We Guard."

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"Research With Peaches in the South," (we would like to be facetious about this title - Ed.) a part of a symposium on recent developments in planting, cultivation, and cover crop practices presented before the annual session of the Southern Section, American Society for Horticultural Science, has been mimeographed and is available for distribution. John T. Bregger, Project Supervisor of the Orchard Erosion Investigations at Clemson, S. C., is the author of the paper on peach research.

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A patent has been granted to Edward Wilcox, assistant mechanical engineer in the Washington office, for a "variable stripping teeth" device for grain stripping harvesters. The new device is designed to improve the recently patented "stripping harvester" by permitting a variation of the space between the grain stripping teeth to accommodate different sizes of grain stalks.

The invention may be manufactured and used for governmental purposes without the payment of royalty.

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Region 7 is holding a series of technical training schools in each area during February and March. All technical personnel in the areas will participate.